

*It is not for you to know the times of the seasons
that the Father has established by his own authority (Acts 1:7)*

Are the Jehovah's Witnesses False Prophets?

What is a prophet? According to the Old Testament of the Bible a prophet is one “who is a spokesman for God.” *Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, at 685 (*PBD*). God's words are placed in the prophet's mouth by God “through revelation, or as in the case of Moses, through immediate conversation with the theophany of God (Exodus 33:11). As it is written in Deuteronomy 18:18, God stated regarding the prophet, “[I] will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I should command him.” (*ibid.*).

“Three words are employed in the Old Testament to designate the prophet, namely, *navi*, *roeh*, and *hozeh*. Each of the words designates one who is a spokesman for God.” (*PBD* at ____). The Hebrew *nabiy* (*navi*) “means 'prophet,' whether a true or false prophet, (cf. Deuteronomy 13:1-5) (*Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*) (*Vine's*). In the Old Testament, “if what the 'prophet' said proved to be wrong, he was to be killed,” (Deuteronomy 18:20). *Vine's* at 179.

The Hebrew *naba* means to 'prophesy' by inspiration (in prediction or simple discourse). *Vine's*, 5012 at 178. “False prophets, although not empowered by the divine spirit, are spoken of as prophesying also: “... I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied” (Jeremiah 23:21). The false prophet is roundly condemned because he speaks a non-authentic word ... (Ezekiel 13:2-3). [In] the biblical context 'to prophesy' can refer to anything from the frenzied ecstasism of a false prophet to the cold somber proclamation of God's judgment by an Amos or an Isaiah. 'To prophesy' is much more than the prediction of future events. [The] first concern of the prophet is to speak God's word to the people of his own time, calling them to covenant faithfulness.” *Vines*, 5012 at 178.

In the New Testament the Greek for prophet, *propheteuo*, means 'to be a prophet, to prophesy' and is used with the primary meaning of telling forth the divine counsels, e.g., Mt 7:22; 26:68; 1 Cor 11:4,5; 13:9; 14:1, 3-5, 24, 31, 39; Rev 11:3” And, it is used “of foretelling the future, e.g., Mt 15:7; Jn 11:51; 1 Pet 1:10; Jude 14.” *Vine's* 4395, at 178. (see also *prophetes*, *Vine's*, 4396).

In line with this broad definition of prophet, the writers of the New Testament were likewise prophets who spoke, or wrote, the word of God; inspired expressions designed to teach, reprove, and correct, enlighten, explain and instruct. God also used his New Testament prophets to predict the future.

Paul refers to believers within the congregation who prophesy, men and women, and admonishes those men who prophesy with their heads covered (1 Corinthians 11:4). He concedes at 1 Corinthians 13:9 that those who prophesied did so only partially, and emphasized its importance at 1 Corinthians 14:1 where he wrote that Christians should strive eagerly for the gift of prophesy.

Within this expansive concept of prophecy is the narrower gift of foretelling future events, not as mere hopeful predictions of expressed opinions, but predictions that were statements of future facts.

Predicting future events that came to pass is a mark of the true prophet of God. The Old Testament is rife with examples of prophetic predictions such as Isaiah and Jeremiah's forewarning that Babylon would destroy Jerusalem and Judea, which occurred in the 6th century B.C.. Similarly in the New Testament, prophetic writers and speakers warned of future inevitable events. Chief among them was Jesus Christ, the greatest prophet of all who, among other things, spoke of the end times that are to occur, the pending Great Tribulation, coming persecutions upon God's chosen, and Armageddon as described in Matthew chapter 24. Of significance are the eschatological writings in the Book of Revelation to John where in highly symbolic fashion, the end of the age and the Almighty's judgment on mankind is chronicled in sobering detail.

The existence of God's prophets, who by definition must be inspired by God, did not cease with first-century Christians. True inspired prophets within the Christian church have spoken in the name of God for the last 2,000 years.

Joel predicted that in the latter days God would pour out his spirit on all mankind, or flesh, and true believers will utter true God-inspired prophesy, as reiterated by Peter at Pentecost.

17 It will come to pass in the last days, God says, that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh,

Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall see dreams.

18 Indeed, upon my servants and my handmaids I will pour out a portion of my spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. (Acts 2:17, 18 NAB)

This outpouring of the Holy Spirit enabling its recipients to prophesy was not a temporary infusion limited to those first-century Christians. Prophets are a divine institution, individually a part of Christ's body. Some members of Christ's body are apostles, others teachers, and others prophets, as Paul explained at 1 Corinthians 12:27-31. As such, the body of Christ today would be incomplete without the prophet, or spokesman, for God, and no religious organization that claims to be Christian today can be a legitimate representative of God unless it recognizes and possesses within itself as the body of Christ the divine institution of prophet. Stated another way, God's chosen people must function under the prophetic influence of prophet, and those who claim to speak for God must be inspired prophets; otherwise they cannot be God's (only) invisible organization on earth, as the Watchtower Society incorrectly claims to be.

Prophets, among other things, serve to exhort and strengthen the church (Acts 15:32); they teach (2 Peter 2:1), define God's will (Acts 13:1-3), and predict the future (Acts 21:10:11). They are “filled with power, with the spirit of the Lord, with authority, and with might” (Micah 3:8). As such they cannot lie in this role because God does not lie and they are incapable of gross error if they are truly God's spokesman or mouthpiece.

The Watchtower Society of the Jehovah's Witnesses claims to be God's one and only true prophet, and it is God's only and exclusive organization on earth. All other religions (Babylon the Great), it teaches, are false religions functioning under the power and influence of Satan. They write: “Whom has God actually used as his prophet? Jehovah's witnesses are deeply grateful today that the plain facts show that God has been pleased to use them It has been because Jehovah thrust out his hand of power and touched their lips and put his words in their mouths.” (w59 y15 pp.40-41 pars. 13-14) Elsewhere they proclaim, “As Jehovah revealed his truths by means of the first-

century Christian congregation so he does today by means of the present day Christian congregation. Through this agency he is having carried out prophesying on an intensified and unparalleled scale. All this activity is not an accident. Jehovah is the one behind it all." (w64 6/15 p. 365 par 22)

The Watchtower Society has a long track record of claiming it is God who put His words into their mouths, in 1906 writing in part, "... the truths I present, as God's mouthpiece" *Zion Watch Tower*, July 15, 1906, 230), and "Today, Jehovah provides instruction by means of the 'faithful steward,'" (*Pay Attention to Yourself and to All the Flock*, 13). They also claim that "No man can properly interpret prophecy, and the Lord sends his angels to transmit correct information to his people." (*Watchtower*, February 15, 1936, 32). The Watchtower Society teaches that it is "... commission[ed] to speak as a 'prophet' in His name ... " (*Watchtower*, March 15, 1972, 189), and that they "are commission[ed] to serve as the mouthpiece and active agent of Jehovah commissioned to speak as a prophet in the name of Jehovah." *The Nations Shall Know that I Am Jehovah*, 55, 62. And with respect to the Watchtower Society President Joseph Franklin Rutherford's failed prophecy that in 1925 the dead would be resurrected, the Watch Tower stated, "this chronology is not of man, but of God ... the addition of more proofs removes it entirely from the realm of chance into proven certainty the chronology of present truth [is] not of human origin." *Watch Tower* July 1, 1922, 217)

Accordingly, it is beyond question that the Watchtower Society teaches and proclaims that they are "prophets of God" by their own admission, that they are the exclusive spokesmen and mouthpiece for Almighty God, that God puts His words in their mouths, and that they believe that their doctrine and prophetic predictions were, and are, transmitted to them by God and to no one else. Because the Watchtower Society claims to be God's prophets, the words they convey must be inspired by God. They cannot now, after being exposed, deny Godly inspiration. It is logically and scripturally impossible for them to claim to be God's exclusive prophet, yet also claim that God's delivered words are not inspired by God.

The issue addressed in this article is whether the Watchtower Society writers and teachers are false prophets. The Bible warns us repeatedly that there will be false prophets and false teachers among us; those who claim to speak, teach and predict the future on behalf of God (Matthew 7:15, 22; 24:11, 24; 2 Peter 2:11). This question regarding false prophets can be broken down into two sub-categories. First, are the prophet's teachings on biblical doctrine true or false?

While doctrine per se cannot be proven right or wrong with one-hundred-percent certainty, that degree of proof is not necessary to prove a prophet is not endorsed by the Almighty. Lower standards of proof are routinely used in our U.S. judicial system to convict people of capital crimes, requiring only proof beyond a reasonable doubt, not one-hundred-percent certainty. In civil cases liability can be fixed based on a preponderance of the evidence, just over fifty percent.

The evidence presented here in this book, and elsewhere, establishes beyond a reasonable doubt that the Watchtower Society are false prophets with respect to core Christian doctrine because their teachings are profoundly in error. This book examines in great detail the following false Watchtower teachings: a) that man does not have a soul (spirit) that continues to exist in an immaterial state following death; b) only 144,000 anointed Jehovah's Witnesses go to heaven; c) a Great Crowd of Jehovah's Witnesses will live forever on a paradise earth to be ruled over by Jesus Christ and an elite ruling class of 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses from heaven; d) that man can be "educated" to a state of perfection; e) that Jesus Christ is only mediator between God and the 144,000, and that only

the 144,000 are parties to the New Covenant described at Jeremiah 31:31-34; f) that man is acquitted of his sins at death, and that no man is punished for sins committed in this life but only for sins committed during the upcoming 1,000-year-reign; g) that the Trinity doctrine is false and the work of Satan; h) that Jesus Christ is the created archangel Michael, and that while on earth Jesus was only a man, and not the God-man as mainstream Christianity teaches; I) that ancient Jerusalem was destroyed in 607 B.C., rather than 587 B.C., as mainstream Christianity and historical evidence has long established, and j) that the Second Coming of Christ and his presence, or *parousia*, occurred in 1914, which it did not.

Having examined the evidence in great detail over many years, this writer is confident in proclaiming that the Watchtower Society is incorrect with respect to each of the above Watchtower false teachings, that to a reasonable person their theological doctrines have been proven false beyond a reasonable doubt, and accordingly, by definition those responsible at the Watchtower Society for developing and propounding doctrine are false prophets.

The second subcategory asks the question: Are the writers of Watchtower literature, and those in the higher echelons of that organization who approve these writings, false prophets because their many prophetic predictions failed to come true? The answer is yes, absolutely.

FALSE DATES, FALSE PROPHECIES AND QUESTIONABLE MOTIVES

How does one detect a false prophet? The Bible provides one simple test for identifying those false prophets claiming to be God's spokesmen and predictors of the future at Deuteronomy 18:22: “[E]ven though a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if his oracle is not fulfilled or verified, it is an oracle which the Lord did not speak. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously, and you shall have no fear of him.” In other words, if a so-called prophet makes a future prediction and it does not come true, that alleged spokesman for God is a false prophet. The Watchtower Society has a similar test, which they routinely ignore, writing, “Jehovah is the Grand identifier of his true messengers. He identifies them by making the messages he delivers through them come true. Jehovah is the Great Exposer of False Messengers” *Watchtower*, March 1, 1997, 8.

During the course of examining Watchtower literature published during the last 130 years, the sheer number of predictions, or prophecies, which they have made with utmost conviction and dogmatic insistence is truly staggering, nearly as shocking as the abysmal failure rate. The Watchtower Society's founder, Charles Taze Russell, obsessed it seems with dates, times and seasons, failed to have even one prediction prove true, a disheartening track record which appears to have been lost on succeeding generations of the Jehovah's Witnesses through willful or genuine ignorance of their religion's embarrassing past failures. Of the countless failed Watchtower predictions, certain dates in particular are noteworthy, namely 1874, 1914, 1918, 1925 and 1975.

1874

The year 1874 was a pivotal cornerstone in Russell's theology that was taught during the late 19th century, and was not abandoned until the 1930s. Relying heavily on Adventist false prophecies, Russell also taught that 1874 marked the Second Advent, or the Second Coming of Christ, though invisible to the human eye. The Watchtower Society's founder, Russell, wrote that “[t]he second advent of our Lord

in the end or harvest of the Gospel age, occur[ed] in the fall of 1874 October 1874 [was] the date of our Lord's return [T]he time-prophecies thus point to and harmonize with 1874 as the date of our Lord's second presence, assuring us of the fact with mathematical precision” *The Time of the Harvest* (1911 ed.), 125, 127, 129.

A careful study of times and seasons taught in Scripture convinced us that the Lord was due to be present in 1874, and other time teachings of the Word showed that in the spring of 1875 the restitution of all things was due to commence. *Zion's Watch Tower*, August 1883, 1.

Furthermore, Russell also taught that October 1874 marked the beginning of the battle of Armageddon, which would end in October of 1914: “The date of the close of that 'battle' is definitely marked in Scripture as October 1914. It is already in progress, its beginning dating from October 1874.” *Zion's Watch Tower*, January 15, 1892, 23. Needless to say, none of this proved true.

Did Russell or the Watchtower Society bother to correct this false teaching within a reasonable period of time in subsequent years? No. The year 1874, the alleged Second Coming of Christ, served as core Watchtower doctrine up until the 1930s. They wrote: “The second coming of the Lord ... began in 1874 Prophecy cannot be understood until it has been fulfilled or is in the course of fulfillment.” *Creation* 1927, 2,175,000 ed., 289. “The Scriptural proof is that the second presence of the Lord Jesus Christ began in 1874 A.D.” *Prophecy*, 1929, 1,589,000 ed., 65. Not until 1932 did the Watchtower Society acknowledge this false prophecy, shifting the Second Coming from 1874 to 1914 when it conceded its manifest error: “The prophecy of the Bible, fully supported by the physical facts in fulfillment thereof, shows that the second coming of Christ dates from the fall of the year 1914.” *What is Truth?* (1932), 48.

1914

Of all the dates, the times, and the seasons which the Watchtower Society holds dear, none is more important today than 1914 when, they teach incorrectly, Christ allegedly returned invisibly to earth at his second coming. However, before 1914 the Society taught many other things which have proven to be false. Before 1914 they taught that 1914 marked the end of all earthly government institutions, and the fall and utter destruction of all false religions; that year was to be the end of Armageddon, the end of the Gentile Times, and the beginning of Christ's millennial 1,000-year-reign over Jehovah's Witnesses in a paradise on earth. Little known to the Jehovah's Witnesses, pyramidology - measurements taken from Egypt's Pyramid of Giza - was used in part to calculate 1914, a pagan occultish practice condemned in the Bible. The Society wrote, in *The Way to Paradise*, at 171, that “The Bible and 'The Bible in Stone' [the Pyramid of Giza] give the date 1914: for the beginning of the great change.”

With Armageddon having allegedly begun in 1874, Russell was adamant that it would end in 1914, writing with respect to that date, “We see no reason for changing the figures – nor could we change them if we would. They are, we believe God's dates, not ours. But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble.” *Zion's Watch Tower*, July 15, 1894, 226. “... The battle of the great day of God Almighty ... [t]he date of the close of that 'battle' is definitely marked in Scripture as October 1914. *Zion's Watchtower*, January 15, 1892, 23.

The beginning of the earthly phase of the Kingdom in the end of A.D. 1914 will, we understand, consist wholly of the resurrected holy ones of

olden time – from John the Baptizer back to Abel - “Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the holy prophets. *Studies in the Scriptures, Series IV - The Day of Vengeance*, 625.

And yet “Jerusalem must be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled; hence, trodden down until A.D. 1914, when the day of wrath will be passed, and the resurrection and return of the “whole house of Israel” due. *Three Worlds and the Harvest of This World* (1877) 166.

“That the deliverance of the saints [the 144,000] must take place some time before 1914 is manifest, since the deliverance of fleshly Israel, as we shall see, is appointed to take place at that time.” *Studies in the Scriptures, Series III – Thy Kingdom Come* (1908 ed.).

1914 was to be the year that 40 years of “harvest” work was to be completed – the completion of the preaching work and the in-gathering of additional Watchtower believers, but as we know, the Watchtower preaching work continues: “.... [T]he close of 1874 marked the beginning, as the close of 1914 will mark the end of this 40 years of harvest” *Studies in the Scriptures, Series III – Thy Kingdom Come*, 149 – 150. Furthermore, all religions, other than the Watchtower Society, were regarded then, as now, as false and under the influence of Satan, and are referred to as Babylon the Great. And Babylon, it was prophesied, was to be completely destroyed – all religions, except their own, were to be utterly vanquished in 1914.

The seventh trumpet sounds from August 1840 until “the time of trouble,” or day of wrath is ended. Hence, it doubtless ends with the Times of the Gentiles, and this forty years of conquest; and therefore, sounds until A.D. 1914, at the end of which, Babylon the great will have fallen, and the “dragon be bound: that is, the nations will be subdued, and “the prince of this world cast out.” *Three Worlds and The Harvest of This World* (1877), 143.

A.D. 33, to A.D. 70 was 36 ½ years; and so from A.D. 1878 to the end of A.D. 1914 is 36 ½ years. And, with the end of A.D. 1914, what God calls Babylon, and what men call Christendom, will have passed away, as already shown in prophecy. *Studies in Scriptures, Series III – Thy Kingdom Come*, (1891) 153.

October, 1914, will witness the full end of Babylon, “as a great millstone cast into the sea, utterly destroyed as a system. *Watch Tower*, June 15, 1911, 190.

These prophecies proved false as well. To add insult to injury, before 1914 the Watchtower Society also prophesied that all of mankind's governments would be overturned in 1914, and God's kingdom on earth would “assume control.” *Studies in Scriptures, Series II – The Time is at Hand*, (1889) 77, 78.

True, it is expecting great things to claim, as we do, that within the coming twenty-six years all present governments will be overthrown and

dissolved. In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished at the end of A.D. 1914. Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God's Word. *Studies in the Scriptures, Series II – The Time is at Hand* (1889) 99, 101.

The year 1914 was looked upon differently after it came and went because each and every prophecy proclaimed with respect to that date proved false. Subsequently, new dates and new predictions, and shockingly radical revisions were made by the Watchtower Society of their previous false prophecies once the extent of their egregious errors came to light. Today the Watchtower teaches that 1914 marked the beginning of the end, not the end of the end, as taught up to 1914. Obviously the change in predictions and the significance of associated events is profound. The Jehovah's Witnesses are taught today, and are required to believe, that the Second Coming of Christ, and his “invisible” presence on this earth, happened in 1914.

Changing the significance of 1914 and disavowing the false prophecies and occurrences associated with the years 1874 – 1914 inclusive, whether implicitly or explicitly, is an admission by the Watchtower Society that they are false prophets. The false nature of earlier predictions is compounded by later attempts to deny they made certain of those pre-1914 false prophecies and statements of “facts” in the first place. In other words, the Watchtower Society is guilty of trying to rewrite their own history; of denying what they taught, believed and prophesied, notwithstanding overwhelming documented evidence to the contrary.

To illustrate, as pointed out by Paul Grundy, author of jwfacts.com – most likely the finest overall website dedicated in great detail to the Jehovah's Witnesses religion, and to whom this writer is profoundly indebted – many of the Society's false prophetic predictions were contained within *Studies in the Scriptures*, which they continued to use after 1914. Subsequent editions of this series of writings were changed to reflect an altogether different past; a retroactive alteration aimed at changing the “false” to the “truth.”

As Paul Grundy writes, “The 1908 edition of *Studies in the Scriptures, Series III – Thy Kingdom Come* stated on p. 228 that the resurrection would occur before 1914. The 1915 edition changed this to state that the resurrection was to occur soon after 1914.” The 1908 edition provides, “That the deliverance of the saints must take place some time before 1914 is manifest” While the 1915 edition provides, “That the deliverance of the saints must take place very soon after 1914 is manifest.” This is no trivial change, but a fundamental misappropriation of the truth, a disturbing alteration of facts which served to conceal the reality of the false prophecies the Watchtower Society actually taught.

Even more bothersome for an organization which claims it alone was granted biblical truth is their subsequent handling of the crucial year 1914 with respect to Christ's return. Grundy writes, “In 1914, the Watchtower was teaching that Jesus' presence began in 1874 and his heavenly rulership began in 1878.”

Our belief that the Kingdom began to be set up, or brought into power, in April, 1878, be it observed, rests on exactly the same foundation as our belief that the Lord became present in Oct. 1874, and that the harvest began at that time. *Thy Kingdom Come*, p. 205.

As chronicled in detail above, pre-1914 prophecies predicted that 1914 marked the end of Armageddon, the conclusion of the time of troubles, and that Christ's Second Coming and presence began in 1874; nothing could be clearer. However, in subsequent years the Watchtower Society has gone to great lengths covering up those false prophecies, in effect denying they ever taught them in the first place, writing: "The Watchtower has consistently presented evidence that Jesus' presence in heavenly kingdom power began in 1914. Events since that year testify to Jesus' presence. Jehovah's witnesses have consistently shown from the Scriptures that the year 1914 marked the beginning of this world's time of the end and that 'the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men' has drawn near." *Watchtower*, January 15, 1993, 5, 9.

But that is simply not true. As established above, the Watchtower Society on many occasions taught the opposite; that 1874, not 1914, was the beginning of Armageddon; and that 1874 marked the beginning of Christ's presence and His Second Coming, not 1914. The extent of the Watchtower's cover-up is astounding, as seen by the following excerpts:

True to such calculations, 1914 did mark the end of those times and the birth of God's kingdom in heaven with Christ Jesus as king. Just think of it! Jehovah granted his people that knowledge nearly four decades before those times expired. *Yearbook*, 1975, 37.

Of all men used by God to prophesy, Jesus is outstanding. Based on what he said, along with the words of Daniel and John, Jehovah's witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as marking the start of the "conclusion of the system of things." *Awake!* January 22, 1973, 8.

As for the time of Christ's second presence, Daniel's prophecy is again the one that gives the chronology for it. (Dan 4:16) It was figured out as pointing to A.D. 1914, and the Watchtower called notice to the significance of 1914 in the year 1879. *Watchtower*, November 1, 1952, 658.

[I]n 1914 C.E. ... the Most High God Jehovah installed the Messiah Jesus on the heavenly throne in order to reign and go subduing among his enemies. (Psalm 110:1-6; Acts 2:34-36; Hebrews 10:12, 13)

[A] prophecy providentially caused sincere 19th-century Bible students to be in expectation. By linking the "seven times" of Daniel 4:25 with "the times of the Gentiles," they anticipated that Christ would receive Kingdom power in 1914. *Watchtower*, September 15, 1998, 15.

For over thirty years, before that date and for half a century since, Jehovah's witnesses have pointed to the year 1914 as the time for the end of the "appointed times of the nations" and the time in which Christ would

begin his Kingdom rule. (Luke 21:24). *Watchtower*, February 15, 1966, 103.

Why, then, do the nations not realize and accept the approach of this climax of judgment? It is because they have not heeded the worldwide advertising of Christ's return and his second Presence. Since long before World War I Jehovah's witnesses pointed to 1914 as the time for this great event to occur. *Watchtower*, Jun 15, 1954, 370.

This was a new revelation of great importance to God's people who had been anxiously awaiting his second presence toward the end of the nineteenth century. *Watchtower*, July 15, 1965, 428.

But none of this is true when one compares these latter assertions with earlier pre-1914 prophecy. Their “understanding” of 1874 did not change until 1943 when that date, as being the year of the “Return of the Lord Jesus Christ” was done away with. *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years has Approached*, 209. The Watchtower continued to falsely teach that Jesus' presence began in 1874 well into the 1920s, writing: “Bible prophecy shows that the Lord was due to appear for the second time in the year 1874. Fulfilled prophecy is otherwise designated the physical facts; and the facts are indisputable.” *Watch Tower*, November 1, 1922, 333. They also wrote: “The Scriptural proof is that the second presence of the Lord Jesus Christ began in 1874 A.D.” *Prophecy*, 1929, 65, 66.

1918

With the passage of 1914 and the all-to-apparent failure of so many prophetic predictions, disappointment among the faithful was grave, as one would expect. In response, the Watchtower Society simply shifted forward failed prophecies to 1918. This was the new date in which the 40-year harvest and preaching work would end:

The parallel, therefore, would establish definitely that the harvest would close forty years thereafter; to wit, in the spring of A.D. 1918. If this be true, and the evidence is very conclusive that it is true, then we have only a few months in which to labor before the great night settles down when no man can work. *Watch Tower*, September 1, 1916, 265.

That the harvest began in 1878, there is ample and convincing proof. The end of the harvest is due in the spring of 1918. *Watch Tower*, May 1, 1918, 132.

1918 became the year when 144,000 were to be resurrected to heaven, or glorified: “Our proposition is that the glorification of the Little Flock [will occur] in the spring of 1918 A.D. *Studies in the Scriptures – The Finished Mystery* at 64.

Mainstream Christianity, or Christendom, which the Jehovah's Witnesses refer to as Babylon the Great, was also to be destroyed in 1918. They write: “... [T]he spring of 1918 will bring upon Christendom a spasm of anguish greater than that experienced in the fall of 1914. *ibid.* 62. “... [I]n the

parallel year of 1918, I infer we should look for the complete overthrow of nominal Spiritual Israel; i.e., The fall of Babylon.” ibid. 129. “At that time there is every reason to believe the fallen angels will invade the minds of many of the Nominal church people, driving them to exceedingly unwise conduct and leading to their destruction at the hands of the enraged masses.” ibid. 128. “Christendom shall be cut off in the brief but terribly eventful period beginning in 1918 A.D.” ibid. 398-399.

Also, in the year 1918, when God destroys the churches wholesale and church members by millions, it shall be that any that escape shall come to the works of Pastor Russell to learn the meaning of the downfall of Christianity. Ibid. 485.

As with the false prophecies leading up to 1914, none of this proved true, though it no doubt served as a vital deterrent by scaring the disillusioned flock away from mainstream Christianity, or Christendom, and all other religions for that matter, keeping them within the fold.

1925

1918 was also significant because that year the Watchtower Society, through its new president Rutherford, made one of the greatest prophecies in Watchtower history, a prophesy which became the driving force between 1918 and 1925 in efforts to mend the damage to the organization caused by pre-1918 failures. It was predicted with utmost certainty that millions of humans on earth – non-Jehovah's Witnesses – would never die.

Originally it was official Watchtower doctrine that the Little Flock of 144,000 and the Great Crowd of other sheep would both go to heaven, and that millions would definitely never die because Jesus opened up salvation to all mankind. “[Bible Students] [u]nderstood that people then living – mankind in general – had the opportunity to survive right into the time of restitution and that they would then be educated in Jehovah’s requirements for life. If obedient, they would gradually attain to human perfection. If rebellious, they would, in time, be destroyed forever.” *Proclaimers*, 163.

Of course that piece of core doctrine has been discarded, among many others. Today, only the elite 144,000 allegedly go to heaven while the Great Crowd of Jehovah's Witnesses they rule over live on a paradise earth forever, all of which is non-biblical.

The “Millions Now Living Will Never Die” doctrine was emphatic, but quite incorrect in its prophetic prediction because millions then living did die, virtually everyone. Yet the fervor and single-minded conviction with which this prophecy was uttered leaves little doubt that many continued to believe the Watchtower despite its atrocious track record.

The original theory was propounded in February of 1918 at a public discourse, which became the basis for a 128-page book published in 1920 entitled, “*Millions Now Living Will Never Die*” (*Millions*). Contained therein is another startling false prophecy. It was taught that the earthly resurrection would begin in 1925, beginning with the resurrection of men like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob of the Old Testament, not to mention Noah, and prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah, and many other such figures of note.

The Bible and “The Bible in Stone” [the Pyramid of Giza] give the date of 1914 for the beginning of the great change. History proves that the ouster

proceedings began promptly on time. Prophecy indicates that 1925 – 1926 will see the greater part of the ousting completed. (*The Way to Paradise*, 171.)

When you take up a more advanced study of the Bible, you will find that the year 1925 A.D. is particularly marked in prophecy. ____ at 220

Seventy jubilees of fifty years each would be a total of 3,500 years. That period of time beginning 1575 years before A.D. 1 of necessity would end in the fall of the year 1925, at which time the type ends and the great anti-type must begin. What, then, should we expect to take place? The chief thing to be restored is the human race to life and since other Scriptures definitely fix the fact that there will be a resurrection of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and other faithful ones of old, and that these will have the first favour, we may expect 1925 to witness the return of these faithful men of Israel from the condition of death, being resurrected and fully restored to perfect humanity and made the visible, legal representatives of the new order of things on earth. *Millions*, 88.

The date 1925 is even more distinctly indicated by the Scriptures because it is fixed by the law God gave to Israel. *Watch Tower*, September. 1, 1922, 262.

[T]his chronology is not of man, but of God ... [T]he addition of more proofs removes it entirely from the realm of chance into that of proven certainty [T]he chronology of present truth [is] ... not of human origin. *Watch Tower*, July 1, 1922, 217.

The year 1925 is a date definitely and clearly marked in Scripture, even more clearly than that of 1914. *Watch Tower*, 1924, 211.

Not true. The above prophecies are false, and no amount of obfuscation can overcome the plain truth that the Watchtower Society are false prophets of the highest caliber.

1975

Unable to refrain from predicting the beginning of Armageddon and the commencement of Christ's millennial reign, the Watchtower Society, as tradition would have it, pointed to 1975 as the year of that battle as far back as the 1960s. While not as brazenly explicit as they were in years past, it was crystal clear to all the Jehovah's Witnesses what the Society was prophesying; that Armageddon would commence in 1975. The formula for their calculations was rather simple. They assumed man (Adam) was created in 4026 B.C. Since God created all things in six figurative days and rested on the seventh, and attributing 1,000 years for each such day ($1,000 \times 6 = 6,000$ years), counting forward 6,000 years from 4026 B.C. takes one to 1975 A.D. They then drew parallels with the end of the 6,000 years – since God rested on the seventh day – and concluded that that must be the date God will bring the “system of things” to an end at Armageddon and usher in Christ's “restful” millennial reign on earth. This false prophecy began to be circulated in 1966 when the Watchtower predicted the fulfillment of the end-time

prophecies. The following excerpts, and all others in this article, are taken from jwfacts.com:

Does God's rest day parallel the time man has been on earth since his creation? Apparently so. In what year, then, would the first 6,000 years of man's existence and also the first 6,000 years of God's rest day come to an end? In 1975. It means that within a relatively few years we will witness the fulfillment of the remaining prophecies that have to do with the "time of the end." *Awake!* October 8, 1966, 19-20.

It did not take the brothers very long to find the chart beginning on page 31, showing that 6,000 years of man's existence end in 1975. Discussion of 1975 overshadowed about everything else. "The new book compels us to realize that Armageddon is, in fact, very close indeed," said a conventioneer. Surely it was one of the outstanding blessings to be carried home.... Time is short. Time is running out, no question about that. *Watchtower*, October 15, 1966, 629, 631.

During the 1967 Sheboygan, Wisconsin, District Convention, during the "Stay Alive to Seventy-Five" talk, it was proclaimed that Jehovah God "has held up before all of us a new goal. A new year. Something to reach out for and it just seems it has given all of us so much more energy and power in this final burst of speed to the finish line. And that's the year 1975. Well, we don't have to guess what the year 1975 means if we read the Watchtower. And don't wait 'till 1975. The door is going to be shut before then. As one brother put it, "Stay alive to seventy-five. Eighty-three months remain."

The message continued to be advanced up until 1975. During the November 1968 Pampa, Texas, assembly, the official Watchtower stance on 1975 was repeatedly driven home. Here, the 83-month countdown to 1975 was unmistakeable: "... not really a full 83 months remains, so let's be faithful and confident and ... we will be alive beyond the war of Armageddon."

Other publications were no less explicit. They wrote: "Within a few years at most the final parts of the Bible prophecy relative to these "last days" will undergo fulfillment." *Watchtower*, May 1, 1968, 272. "What about this talk concerning the year 1975? Their interest has been kindled by the belief that 1975 will mark the end of the 6,000 years of human history since Adam's creation bible chronology reinforced with fulfilled Bible prophecy shows that six thousand years of man's existence will soon be up, yes, within this generation! (Matt. 24:34) This is not the time to be toying with the words of Jesus that 'concerning that day and hour nobody knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the father.'" (Matt. 24:36). ... Even if one cannot see beyond 1975, is this any reason to be less active?" Why Are you Looking Forward to 1975? *Watchtower*, August 15, 1968, 494.

And now, as the year 1975 opens up, some thousands of the anointed remnant still alive on the earth, look ahead to realizing that joyful prospect. The increasing "great crowd" of their sheep-like companions look forward with them to entering the New order without interruption of life. *Watchtower*, December 15, 1974, 766.

The fact that fifty-four years of the period called the "last days" have already gone by is highly significant. It means that only a few years, at most, remain before the corrupt system of things dominating the earth is

destroyed by God. *Awake!* October 8, 1968, 13.

If you are a young person, you also need to face the fact that you will never grow old in this present system of things. Why not? Because all the evidence in fulfillment of Bible prophecy indicates that this corrupt system is due to end in a few years. *Awake!* May 22, 1969, 15.

In an uncharacteristic move, the Watchtower Society acknowledged the error of its ways in 1980, to a degree, admitting that “considerable expectation was aroused regarding the year 1975... [t]here were other statements published that implied that such realization of hopes by that year was more of a probability than a mere possibility.” *Watchtower*, March 15, 1980, 17. But even this concession is lacking in candor because the false 1975 prophecy wasn't merely implied; it was expressly stated, and every Jehovah's Witness between 1966 and 1975 knew exactly what was being promoted.

Glossed over in the 1975 debacle was the disruptive effect it had on the rank-and-file. In reliance on the “impending end,” careers were cut short, higher education was abandoned, marriages were postponed, children were never conceived or raised, and homes and other property were sold off. As to be expected, pioneering work skyrocketed leading up to 1975, and between 1966 and 1975 Watchtower publishers grew at an astonishing rate of 37 percent. Predicting the end would come in 1975 worked.

The dates 1874, 1914, 1918, 1925 and 1975 represent the proverbial tip of the prophetic iceberg because their literature is awash with countless other failed prophecies, events and blatantly erroneous statements of fact, all of which are well documented elsewhere.

1798 was the end of papal dominion, *Three Worlds and the Harvest of this World*, 1877, 158; the “Time of the End” was supposed to run for 115 years from 1799 to 1914 A.D. *Studies in the Scriptures, Series III – Thy Kingdom Come*, 23; the 6,000 years of creation were supposedly to have ended in 1873, *Studies in the Scriptures, Series II – The Time is at Hand*, 1915 ed. 363; the signs of the end times (war, earthquakes, etc.) were to have begun by 1880, *Studies in the Scriptures IV – The Day of Vengeance*, 604; the sealing of the so-called anointed 144,000 was to be complete in 1881, *Studies in the Scriptures, Series VI – New Creation*, 1915, ed. 95; and 1910 was the year of the rapture, *Studies in the Scriptures, Series III – Thy Kingdom Come*, 364.

When the end of the world failed to materialize in 1914, the date, an “established truth,” was moved to 1915, *Studies in the Scriptures, Series II – the Time is at Hand*, 1915 ed. 99, 101, 242. They predicted the end of World War I to be October 1, 1917, but changed that prediction retroactively in a subsequent edition to “probably 1918,” *Studies in the Scriptures, Series VII – The Finished Mystery*, 75,000 ed., 268 vis-a-vis 2,604,000 ed.; 1919 was the supposed year Christ inspected the earth's churches and found only the Watchtower Society cleansed and preaching the truth, and accordingly chose it as God's exclusive church organization on earth (notwithstanding the countless errors and false doctrine taught up until 1943); and another “end for all governments” and “end of Christendom” was to occur in the fall of 1920 (changed in subsequent printings), *Studies in the Scriptures, Series VII – The Finished Mystery*, 1918 ed., 179, 258, 313, 542.

The “calling” of the 144,000 who would go to heaven was to close in 1921, a date subsequently changed as well, *Studies in the Scriptures, Series VII – The Finished Mystery*, 64; and this time Christendom was to be destroyed in 1932. *Watchtower*, February 15, 1938, 55.

As Paul Grundy points out with respect to the “sealing” of the 144,000, that date has changed

repeatedly, beginning in 1878, and then 1881, 1910, 1914, 1925, 1931 and finally 1935 (*Watchtower*, February 15, 1995, 19). By 2007 the Watchtower Society conceded that that date was also wrong and that they cannot “set a specific date for when the calling of Christians to the heavenly hope ends.” *Watchtower*, May 1, 2007, 31.

The laundry list of false dates and doctrine continue into the 40s and 50s. While many of the Jehovah's Witnesses are skeptical of the evidence, a detailed analysis and accompanying scans of supporting literature can be found at www.jwfacts.com. The evidence speaks for itself.

